

Our three-county Congressional district produces nearly \$4.2 billion in agricultural goods each year. Monterey County alone produces more than 85 specialty vegetable crops with a value of \$3.5 billion. We live in a special area, and I'm always keeping an eye on how our farming families are faring.

In July, I was very proud to take part in the approval in the House of two major agriculture bills.

The first to be approved on the floor of the House was a historic Farm Bill that ([H.R. 2419](#)) diverted \$1.6 billion from commodity crops to specialty crops. For too long commodities and their congressional sponsors have run roughshod over fruits and vegetables, but under Democratic leadership in Congress, this will change for the better.

These funds will include money for research, nutrition, food safety and specialty crop marketing programs. Food safety is of utmost importance to our farmers and is an integral investment not only in our region's farms but also in our nation's health. Funds directed to our fruits and vegetable farmers for competitiveness and marketing programs are also an excellent use of taxpayer dollars that will offer our nation a healthy return on investment.

The second bill that was approved in July by the House was the Appropriations Agriculture bill, which funds the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration. When the president signs this bill, it will direct \$2.7 million to the U.S. Agricultural Research Station in Salinas for construction projects. More than \$850,000 will go toward local ARS research programs.

The state will also receive more than \$30 million for pest and disease control, including \$24 million to fight the glassy-winger sharpshooter and Pierce's Disease and \$6.5 million to battle Sudden Oak Death. The light brown apple moth is another unwanted visitor. This year, the House Agriculture Committee approved the use of all funds necessary to eradicate this pest from the California landscape.

In the coming months I will continue to lead the charge in Congress for action on a

multi-pronged agenda toward a healthy and prosperous produce industry.

[Click Here for E-Newsletter Home Page](#)